

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

2 INTRODUCED BY TESTER

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DESIGNATE AN APPROPRIATE INTERIM
6 COMMITTEE OR DIRECT SUFFICIENT STAFF RESOURCES TO STUDY METHODS OF SIMPLIFYING LAWS
7 RELATED TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES.

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9 WHEREAS, Montana's workers' compensation laws were first enacted in 1915 and have been amended
10 in virtually every legislative session since that time; and

11 WHEREAS, the significant impact on Montana's economy from workers' compensation premiums and
12 benefits often overshadows the economic costs of understanding arcane provisions of a patchwork of workers'
13 compensation laws; and

14 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature has the ability to simplify and clarify regulations by directing a study
15 committee to review, in conjunction with administrative rules, all of the provisions related to administration of the
16 Workers' Compensation Act and the Occupational Disease Act of Montana, excluding indemnity benefits; and

17 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature believes that the traditional workers' compensation system of
18 compensating injured workers without regard to fault should continue into the future; and

19 WHEREAS, terms and concepts, such as which employers, employees, and independent contractors
20 are covered by the workers' compensation laws, have become confusing in current statutes; and

21 WHEREAS, the list of exempted employments of current law may be discriminatory and may undermine
22 a public policy that calls for all employment to be covered by the principles of workers' compensation coverage;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Montana employers and employees deserve to have workers' compensation laws that are
25 clear, concise, and understandable.

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27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
28 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

29 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to
30 section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to examine the workers' compensation laws and related

1 administrative rules of the State of Montana and provide any suggested changes for laws to clarify the language
2 and intent for all who are governed by workers' compensation laws of this state.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
4 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
6 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2004.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
8 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 59th Legislature.

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